

Committees

Committees are the first to consider proposed legislation. Committees accomplish three (3) tasks:

1. Committees decide what legislation is sent to the House or Senate.
 - a. Committees give each bill a complete and respectful hearing including presentations by authors, Cabinet, and Lobbyist as well as thorough discussion and debate by ALL committee members.
 - b. Committee procedure is somewhat different than that used by the Legislature. Committees are only as formal as needed to affectively get their work done.
 - c. Committees work to send legislation to the floor, preparing their members to take an active role in floor discussion and debate of the bill.

Committee Members and Chairs are responsible individually and as a group for the following:

Active debate

- Every member participates.
- Everyone creates a positive atmosphere that encourages involvement by everyone.
- Every member helps everyone else do their best.
- Every member sits in a different chair beside different people at each committee hearing.

Be prepared

- Know and understand the procedures and use it.
- Understand and be informed on the legislation in committee before YIG.

Be respectful, extend courtesy to everyone

- Show respect for the committee, the room and its equipment, Authors, Lobbyist, Cabinet, and advisor.
- Be informed on the subject of the bill.
- Consider the merits of the bill, listen with full attention.

Advisors

- Advisors are in the committee to help on procedure.
- Assist the chairperson after each meeting to clarify any questions.

Scheduling committee time

Committees meet for the total time assigned each session.

1. Committees meet for the total time assigned each session.
 - a. The committee's time in each session is managed to ensure that each bill is considered and determine those to be sent to the floor.
2. A Docket will be posted so stating where and during which time period each bill will be considered in its committee, this will hopefully allow adults to see as many of their students present as possible.
3. Bills not completed in the session they are assigned, may be carried over to the next committee session.
4. By the end of the final committee, all bills will have had a complete hearing by their committee.

Committee procedure

The Chair welcomes everyone to the meeting and introduces anyone there to give testimony.

1. The Chair welcomes everyone to the meeting, then announces the first Bill to be considered
2. The Bill is read aloud.
3. The authors present their bill, explain why it is important for the state, why it should be passed, and answer any questions the committee may have.
4. The committee discusses the bill, asks any questions to the bill authors, and debates.
5. The committee discusses questions and debates to reach its decision.
6. When the discussion/debate is complete or reaches its allotted time limit, take a vote. A simple majority is required.
 - a. The Chair does not vote except to break a tie.
7. If the Committee votes a Bill forward then it will be placed on the docket for the House or Senate, depending on which Chamber it is assigned to. If a bill does not pass the committee, it will not be presented again.

Possible motions in committee

To recommend a bill without amendments out of committees to the House or Senate, a member says, "I move this bill reported to pass".

- a. If passed, the bill goes to the House or Senate of its origin.

Committee Chairs

Committee Chairs are appointed and trained beforehand. They may not debate, and only vote to break a tie. They lead the committees through debate, and are responsible for keeping to the schedule.

Responsibility of the Chair

1. At the First Meeting:
 - a. See that members can see each other.
 - b. Do introductions and "get acquainted" activities (avoid use of candy, food or drinks). Include the Committee Advisor and other adults in the room.
 - c. Explain the purpose of the committee and how it works and do a practice bill to give everyone experience in the procedure.
 - d. Review the schedule; explain the order of bills and how the committee's time is used.
2. The Chair and all members are responsible for the care of their committee room.
 - a. Explain the use of the committee rooms as a privilege given by the Statehouse and review how we care for the room (no candy, food, drinks, do not move papers or materials left by Legislators, avoiding playing with microphones, clean up at each session, etc.).
3. The Chair
 - a. Acts and speaks in a way that helps everyone in the committee succeed, involves everyone and gives authors, Lobbyist and Cabinet a respectful experience.
 - b. Represents the committee to the Bill Coordinator. The Chair picks up the Committee Folder from the Bill Coordinator before each committee meeting, returns the folder to the Bill Coordinator immediately after the meeting, and verbally tells the Bill Coordinator the action taken on each bill.
 - c. Has the Clerk take attendance at each meeting.
 - d. Manages time so the tasks of the committee are accomplished.

- e. Has the committee meet for the total time and does not dismiss early.
- f. Considers bills in order as listed inside the Committee Folder. Once a bill is considered, draw a line through that bill number; this lets the Bill Coordinator know you have heard this bill.
- g. Manages amendments made in committee. Amendments are made in writing and, if passed, attached to the bill by a paperclip. Do not write on the original bill.
- h. Amendments note the line(s) being altered. Note on the Bill Disposition sheet the bill is amended and, if passed, passed as amended. Amendments cannot change the intent of the bill.
- i. Completes the committee portion of the Bill Disposition sheet.
- j. Assures that the Majority and Minority Reports are written to accurately inform the Legislature on what the committee learned about the bill, why the committee took the action it did, and the committee's reasons for the Legislature to pass (majority) or defeat (minority) the bill.
- k. Prepares all committee members to actively participate in floor debate on bills the committee reports out to the Legislature.
- l. Leads the committee member participation in floor debate.

Responsibility of the Committee Advisor

1. Committee Advisors assist with procedure and the committee process. They may be asked for advice before, during or after committee sessions. Chairs are to meet with the Committee Advisors after each session to get their observations and suggestions.
2. Advisors do not comment on the content or idea of legislation nor are they to influence voting on issues.